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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000910

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: PRT SALAH AD DIN: MOI HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE
UNDERSTAFFED; SAD JAILS OVERCROWDED

Classified By: PRT Leader Rick Bell for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: In a March 24 meeting, Idris Ahmed Khalaf, Deputy Chief of the Salah ad Din (SaD) Office of Human Rights, told the PRT that overall conditions in Ministry of the Interior (MOI) Detention facilities have "marginally" improved but are still severely overcrowded. Idris said that although his office is understaffed, improved security has allowed investigators to increase their case loads. Based on their investigations over the last year, police abuse cases are decreasing; there are fewer instances of torture and fewer arrests of obviously innocent people in the province. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) On March 24, the SaD PRT Rule of Law Coordinator met with Idris Ahmed Khalaf, Deputy Chief of the SaD MOI Office of Human Rights, and one of his investigators, Ali Mohammed Najim. Idris told the PRT that the SaD MOI Human Rights Office has been operating in the province since it was established in November, 2005. He said the lack of sufficient staff has made it very difficult to visit all the outlying MOI detention facilities in the province; the office has only four investigators, the chief, deputy, and two support personnel. The office reports directly to the MOI Human Rights central office in Baghdad, which also supplies its support and training. GOI training in Baghdad is supplemented by frequent workshops and courses offered through the United States Institute of Peace (USIP).

13. (C) Idris said that in some areas support from Baghdad could be improved --for example, the office is responsible for certifying eligibility for widows' benefits, but does not have access to the database in Baghdad. If Baghdad gave the SaD office access, widows would not be forced to wait for such a long time (often months) before they could begin receiving their monthly support payments.

14. (C) In addition to inspecting MOI detention (pre-trial) facilities, Idris said that the investigators organize their work with teams that focus on human rights issues in education, dealing with schools and colleges; health and environment; and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). An Ex-Regime Team handles missing persons cases and the recovery and identification of remains of missing persons from the previous regime. An NGO Team works with NGOs that supply humanitarian aid, such as medicines for chronic diseases, clothing and wheelchairs.

15. (C) The office sends its investigators to visit MOI jails monthly, including juvenile and women's jails. Improved security has allowed investigators to increase their case loads and visit more facilities. Idris said that MOI detention officials in SaD are generally cooperative and allow investigators to inspect MOI facilities throughout the province. He did, however, request assistance in getting permission from MG Rasheed, Samarra Operations Center Commander, to inspect facilities in Samarra. Idris said that, based on the inspections, investigators make recommendations to jail officials on areas such as health conditions and family and attorney

visitation rules. For example, investigators persuaded authorities in the transitory jail to remove mesh separators between prisoners and families to allow for contact visits.

¶6. (C) For cases where the offI\d\$nQ[J
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SUBJECT: FINANCE MINISTER ON GE PAYMENTS, SONS OF IRAQ,
BUDGET

REF: BAGHDAD 766

Classified By: EconMin Marc Wall for Reason 1.4 (b).

¶1. (C) Summary. Finance Minister Bayan Jabr told EMIN on March 30 that he had directed Trade Bank of Iraq (TBI) to make \$400 million in loan proceeds available to the Minister of Electricity to pay some of the \$580M arrearage due to General Electric (GE) on March 29 Jabr further discussed his payment to fund the salaries of the Sons of Iraq (see CJ9 update to Charge,), the unusual arrangements with the Council of Representatives (CoR) and Presidency Council for expediting the finalization of the 2009 budget law, as well as the looming prospect of a rescission budget in June or July if oil prices and production fail to climb. End Summary.

GE Gets Half a Loaf

¶2. (C) During a meeting in his Adnon Palace office with EMIN on March 30, Minister of Finance, Bayan Jabr, explained how, despite the absence of a national budget and against the advice of his advisors, he sought Cabinet approval for a \$400 million loan from TBI to pay part of the delinquent installment due to GE under the December 2008 gas-turbine purchase and another \$34 million to pay the salaries of the Sons of Iraq. The Cabinet approved the loans on March 29. Although, not yet received by GE, Post was told by GE on April 1, that it was satisfied that payment had been transmitted. Also participating were Treasury Attache, James Wallar and CJ9 CO MG David Perkins.

¶3. (C) Jabr acknowledged receiving calls from the office of the Centcom commander urging him to pay GE the delinquent first installment payment (396 Million Euros/\$580 million) of the "Mega Deal" gas-turbine purchase. This payment had just been renegotiated March 19-20 in Washington by the Minister of Electricity (ME), who had agreed to pay GE no later than March 29. In response, Jabr received Cabinet approval and instructed the President of TBI to work out the details with the ME. Jabr told EMIN that he heard there was some confusion over the method of payment, but that as far as he was concerned "the money is available."

How Much? How Fast?

¶4. (SBU) According to Jabr, there are two methods for Getting the funds to GE: a wire transfer through the SWIFT process, which requires a letter of guaranty from GE, or by opening a Letter of Credit (LOC). Jabr said the ME insisted that the GE contract required an LOC which, curiously to Jabr, the ME only wanted to fund up to \$250 million, \$150M less than the authorized amount and well short of the full arrearage. Subsequent to this meeting, Embassy Baghdad confirmed that the ME had requested only a \$400 million loan to fund both the GE and the Siemens gas-turbine purchases, which may have accounted for the ME's wish to open the GE LOC for only \$250 million. By COB March 30, however, the Minister informed the Embassy that, before leaving for several days in Jordan, he

had directed his DG of Accounts to make the entire \$400 million available to GE in the manner most convenient to GE. If GE provided the guaranty, the SWIFT transfer could take place almost immediately. The ME claimed even an LOC would make funds available at JP Morgan Chase in "just a couple of days."

¶5. (SBU) Jabr said that, after the final enactment of a budget, he would be able to add \$1.3 billion (1.7 trillion ID) to the Ministry of Electricity's capital budget based upon the budget passed by the CoR or by cutting the investment budgets of other ministries by around 14 .

Money for SOI to Avert A Crisis

¶6. (C) Jabr further stated that he had directed the deposit of 31.5 billion IQD (approximately \$34 million, or one month's pay) for the Ministry of the Interior's disbursement to the Sons of Iraq. This he said he did over the unanimous objections of his financial advisors, who argued that, because there was no budget it might be held

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in the Tikrit Terrorist Jail, prisoners are forced to sleep in shifts because not everyone can lie on the floor at the same time. As a practical matter, this means that many of the prisoners are forced to stand for much of the time.

¶9. (C) COMMENT: We believe the information from Idris and Ali is reliable. It is consistent with previous reporting based on conversations with the Human Rights office chief, Israa Frahan Ali, and with reporting from other sources, including the Provincial Director of Police, judges, police advisors, and Coalition jail-abuse reporting. The Rule of Law coordinator has inspected the jails personally over the last 19 months and finds his observations consistent in general terms with those of the human rights investigators.

¶10. (C) NOTE: The PRT was instrumental last year in increasing visits by the provincial Health Department to monitor the prisoners' health and treat illnesses, implementing corrections training for the jailers, and successfully lobbying provincial officials for funding for a new transitory jail that will relieve overcrowding. END NOTE.

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